

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 - 20 (Cancelled).

21. (New) A method of manufacturing a vehicle trim component assembly comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a vehicle trim component and a coverstock, wherein one of the vehicle trim component and the coverstock includes a thermoplastic material;
- (b) melting a portion of the thermoplastic material; and
- (c) moving the vehicle trim component and the coverstock into engagement with one another such that the thermoplastic material causes the vehicle trim component and the coverstock to become bonded, thereby providing a vehicle trim component assembly.

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein in step (a) the vehicle trim component includes the thermoplastic material.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein in step (a) the trim component is provided as a rigid panel.

24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the thermoplastic material has a thickness, and wherein in step (b) only a portion of the thickness of the thermoplastic material is melted.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein in step (b) the portion of the thickness of the thermoplastic material is melted within the range of from about 0.001 inches to about 0.010 inches.

26. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein in step (a) the vehicle trim component includes a cover layer and the thermoplastic material.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein in step (a) the cover layer is made from one of vinyl, cloth, carpet, and leather.

28. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein in step (a) the trim component is provided as a rigid panel.

29. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein in step (b) a surface of the thermoplastic material is melted.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein in step (b) the surface is melted by being exposed to a source of radiant heat.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the thermoplastic material has a thickness, and wherein in step (b) only a portion of the thickness of the thermoplastic material is melted.

32. (New) A method of manufacturing a panel assembly comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a substrate and a first material, wherein one of the substrate and the first material includes a thermoplastic material;
- (b) melting a portion of the thermoplastic material; and
- (c) moving the substrate and the first material into engagement with one another such that the thermoplastic material causes the substrate and first material to become bonded, thereby providing a panel assembly.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein in step (a) the substrate is provided as a rigid panel.

34. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the thermoplastic material has a thickness, and wherein in step (b) only a portion of the thickness of the thermoplastic material is melted.

35. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein in step (b) a surface of the thermoplastic material is melted.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, wherein in step (b) the surface is melted by being exposed to a source of radiant heat.